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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BANJUL 000209

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DAKAR PASS RAO, DAO, AND ODC

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/04/2016
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PINS](#) [OPDC](#) [GA](#) [SG](#)
SUBJECT: LETTER TO PRESIDENT BUSH FROM GAMBIAN PRESIDENT
JAMMEH ON ALLEGED SENEGALESE SUPPORT FOR ABORTIVE COUP
ATTEMPT

REF: A. BANJUL 206 AND PREVIOUS
[1](#)B. USUN NEW YORK 2186
[1](#)C. BANJUL 190

BANJUL 00000209 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: AMBASSADOR JOSEPH STAFFORD, REASON 1.5 (B AND D)

[1](#)1. (C) On April 5, 2006, Embassy received a letter, dated March 29, 2006, from Gambian President Jammeh to President Bush alleging the Senegalese Government's support for the recent abortive coup d'tat in The Gambia (ref a). Post will provide the text in this cable and forward the original to Washington (Attn: Shaye Brown, AF/W). Comment in para 3.

[1](#)2. (C) Verbatim Text of message from President Jammeh

BEGIN TEXT:

29 March 2006

Your Excellency,

ATTEMPTED ABORTIVE COUP D'ETAT IN THE GAMBIA

As you would recall, my communication of 15 September 2005 which I addressed to you enumerated series of unsavory activities embarked upon by President Abdoulaye Wade of the Republic of Senegal whose ulterior motives are to destabilise my country.

It is still beyond my comprehension as to why the tireless efforts I deploy in search of pacific means to put a definitive end to this unwarranted antagonism, are being frustrated by President Wade through his machinations.

Contrary to the smear campaign being perpetually waged against my Government by President Wade, in misinforming the international community of our capability of fuelling unrest in the sub region, I undertook a working visit to the sister Islamic Republic of Mauritania from 20 to 22 March 2006 which was aimed at mutually reinforcing bilateral cooperation and sub regional integration.

Incidentally, I had to curtail this important and fruitful mission upon learning that a coup d'tat was in the offing in my country. This unfortunate incident was however aborted and with the exception of the coup leader Colonel Ndure Cham, former Chief of Defence Staff who has fled the country, the rest of the coup plotters have been apprehended.

While investigations are meticulously being carried out, it

has come to light that Colonel Ndure Cham is currently in the Republic of Senegal. However, the most astounding and disheartening aspects of the revelations as depicted by the coup plotters, is that the Government of Senegal had made an unwavering pledge to support them in their ungodly endeavours, that is to overthrow my constitutionally-elected Government.

Given Colonel Ndure Cham's active role in this treasonable act, there is no doubt that his presence in The Gambia will facilitate and enrich the ongoing investigations.

Since such a situation calls for utmost sobriety which I always exhibit under any given circumstance, I am dispatching Special Envoys to President Wade with the view to requesting him to urgently deliver Colonel Ndure Cham to The Gambian authorities.

As I await the outcome of my genuine request from President Wade, I thought it prudent to write and bring to your attention the current state of affairs, and will provide you with an update as new developments unfold.

Please accept Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration and esteem.

//signed//

Alhaji Yahya A J J Jammeh
President of the Republic of The Gambia

His Excellency
Mr. George W. Bush
President of the United States of America
U.S.A.

BANJUL 00000209 002.2 OF 002

END TEXT OF LETTER

13. (C) COMMENT: The September 15, 2005 message cited by Jammeh refers to his letter, reported in ref b, alleging nefarious intentions by the Senegalese leadership toward the GOTG and refuting GOS allegations of GOTG's clandestine shipment of weapons to elements in Guinea Bissau. Last year's message was sent at a time of bilateral strains over transport and border issues; in subsequent months, there were indications of substantial improvement in bilateral ties. Jammeh's latest letter follows allegations by detainees in televised confessions that elements in the Senegalese military were aware of, and prepared to support the coup plot (ref c). Indicative of the Gambian/Senegalese tensions generated by the foiled coup attempt, GOTG officials were conspicuously absent from the Senegalese National Day celebration held April 3 at a Banjul hotel. Last year, various senior GOTG officials were on hand, and the GOTG's then-Information Minister delivered remarks. Senegalese Ambassador Ndiouga Ndiaye, in his remarks at this year's event, stated that Dakar had previously condemned the aborted overthrow attempt, and he took the occasion to reiterate that condemnation -- but we presume that the GOTG doubts the GOS' sincerity, and local media have yet to publish the GOS statement of condemnation. We understand that, in that statement, the GOS also indicated, in an allusion to the at-large coup plot ringleader, Lt Col Ndure Cham, that it would not provide refuge to those involved in the coup plot.

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14. (C) COMMENT CONTINUED: As for the Special Envoys to President Wade mentioned by Jammeh, they were Baboucar Jatta and Agriculture Minister Yancouba Touray; on receipt of Jammeh's letter April 4, Ambassador contacted Jatta and asked about the results of his and Touray's approach to the GOS. In response, Jatta indicated that, on March 31, he and Touray had delivered to President Wade a letter from Jammeh; the

envoys did not know the letter's contents, but Jatta assumed it contained Jammeh's request for cooperation in efforts to apprehend Lt Col Ndure Cham, believed to be in Senegal. Jatta stated that Wade had spoken generally of a desire to maintain good relations between the two countries. Jatta indicated that the GOTG was still awaiting concrete assistance by the GOS to identify Cham's whereabouts and apprehend him. END COMMENT.
STAFFORD